

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION GRANT PROPOSAL FOR EMORY VALLEY CENTER ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

The Emory Valley Center (EVC) is a non-profit agency in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, that serves children and adults with disabilities. The EVC has applied for a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to upgrade its facilities. The ARC and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) have an agreement whereby TVA administers ARC grants in the TVA area. Thus, TVA proposes to administer a \$500,000 ARC grant to the EVC. With the ARC grant and other funds, the EVC proposes to demolish a building on its property and construct a new onsite building. This would allow the EVC to consolidate its operations on a single property and expand its operations.

The proposed actions, including the demolition of an existing building and construction of the proposed building, are the subject of an environmental assessment (EA) prepared by TVA. The EA is incorporated by reference.

Internal scoping by TVA indicated that two feasible alternatives, i.e., the No Action Alternative and the Action Alternative, were available. Under the No Action Alternative, TVA would not administer the ARC grant. Under the Action Alternative, TVA would administer the ARC grant, which would contribute to the overall funds needed by the EVC to demolish its current Work Training Center building and replace it with a new, 37,250 square foot, multi-purpose facility. Because the EVC would likely seek and acquire the necessary funding even without the ARC grant, the proposed facility would likely be constructed under either alternative. Thus, the potential environmental effects anticipated under either alternative would be essentially the same.

TVA's preferred alternative is the Action Alternative.

Due to the nature of the action and environmental conditions on the site of the proposed actions, TVA determined that there would be no effects to floodplains, prime farmland, public recreation opportunities, managed areas, streams listed on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory or Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The proposed demolition and construction activities would generate some fugitive dust as well as particulate matter, primarily from engine exhaust. However, these effects would be temporary and localized, and they are not expected to influence the air quality of Anderson County.

Appropriate best management practices (BMPs) and other measures required by EVC's Construction Storm Water Permit would be implemented to prevent or avoid adverse effects to local surface water quality. Thus, no effects to surface water flow, stream channels, stream banks or groundwater are anticipated. Because no surface water is present on the site of the proposed project, no effects to aquatic life are expected.

The proposed work is located approximately one half mile from a unique prairie habitat. Because of this distance and the localized nature of the work, no effects to this unique habitat are expected. Site clearing and construction would result in the loss of about an acre of onsite wooded habitat. Any animals living on this site would be displaced to adjacent areas. No aggregations of migratory birds, heronries or caves would be affected. The proposed work is not expected to contribute to the spread of exotic or invasive terrestrial species.

TVA determined that the proposed actions would not affect any federally listed or state-listed plant species. Suitable habitat for the federally listed gray bat would not be affected by the proposed construction. Because two trees that could provide suitable roosting habitat for the Indiana bat (federally listed) and the northern long-eared bat (proposed for federal listing) were removed between October 15 and March 31 (when the bats are hibernating elsewhere), TVA determined that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect either bat species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agrees with this determination. Because the project site contains no streams or potential habitat for aquatic life, no effects to any federally listed or state-listed aquatic species would occur.

There would be no effects to wetlands or wetland functions from implementing the proposed actions, as there are no wetlands on the site. Likewise, the site of the proposed action is not within the 100-year or 500-year floodplain. Thus, the proposed action is consistent with the directives in Executive Orders 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) and 11988 (Floodplain Management).

Based on a field reconnaissance, TVA determined that no archaeological resources would be affected by the construction of the proposed building. A Phase I architectural survey was conducted, and one previously unrecorded architectural resource, the Emory Valley School Complex, was identified. This complex of buildings is considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. However, the Work Training Center building, which would be demolished, is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Although construction of the proposed building would have a visual effect on the Emory Valley School Complex, this effect would not be adverse due to the presence of modern development within the immediate area. In consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), TVA finds that no historic properties eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places would be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking. The SHPO concurs in this finding.

The EVC provides services to local residents and does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity or economic situation. The new facility would likely have a beneficial, but minor, long-term effect on the local economy, in that persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities would become more socially and economically independent and less reliant on community social services. No disproportionate effects to any minority or economically disadvantaged populations are expected.

Construction-related traffic would be temporary and is not expected to interfere with normal traffic flow on local streets. Minor increases in local traffic could occur after the new facility is operational. However, any increases in local traffic volume are not expected to affect the level of service on area roads.

Solid wastes from demolition and construction would be sent to an area landfill approved for accepting such wastes. Waste disposal would not affect the capacity or capability of local landfills beyond a minor extent.

The proposed site clearing, demolition, and construction would create visual discord for the duration of construction. The new building would be compatible with the visual character of the surrounding area. Noise would be generated during construction but is not expected to be excessive. Operation of the proposed facility is not expected to generate noticeable levels of noise. No objectionable odors are anticipated.

The EVC sent a completed grant application to the ARC in 2012, and similar information was also sent to interested state and federal agencies. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, TVA consulted with the Tennessee Historical Commission and the Native American Tribes listed in the EA.

Mitigation

The EVC would be responsible for ensuring that the proposed demolition and construction is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner, including the implementation of appropriate BMPs, best construction practices, and any measures stipulated in its Construction Storm Water Permit and any other applicable permits. TVA has not identified any non-routine measures necessary to prevent or compensate for adverse environmental effects.

Conclusion and Findings

Based on the findings listed above and the analyses in the EA, we conclude that the proposed action of administering a \$500,000 ARC grant to the Emory Valley Center, as well as the resultant demolition of an onsite building and the construction of a new 37,250 square foot multi-purpose facility, would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the environment. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required.



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Date Signed